

Gas (iii) importing of gas through international pipeline projects; (iv) formulation of a Coal Bed Methane (CBM) Policy providing attractive fiscal and contractual framework for exploration and production of CBM in the country, for improving the availability of gas.

(d) As per the gas supply agreement between GAIL and the IPPs, the buyer (IPP's) shall build dual fuel capabilities in their plant for meeting their fuel requirement through alternative fuel as and when gas is not available for supply to the buyer. There is no penalty clause for non-supply of gas.

(e) and (f) Yes, Sir. As per Power Purchase Agreement (PPA), idle charge (deemed generation) are being paid for capacity utilization below plants load factor.

Status of ultra mega power projects

487. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Centre's much flouted ultra mega power projects plan is heading for a serious trouble with three of the six units appearing to have been tripped mid-way;

(b) whether it is a fact that the coal based giant power generators which were to come up at Tadri (Karnataka), Akalatar (Chhattisgarh) and Dhopawe (Maharashtra) are facing serious trouble; and

(c) if so, whether Government have made any investigations in this matter and action proposed to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE): (a) and (c) Identification of suitable sites for setting up Ultra Mega Power Projects (UMPPs), by Central Electricity Authority in consultation with States is an ongoing process. In addition to seven sites already identified, Tamil Nadu and Jharkhand have requested for locating Ultra Mega Power Projects in their States also. Depending on the status of clearances and tying up of various inputs, the projects are at different stages.

So far tariff bids have been invited in respect of three projects, namely, Sasan in Madhya Pradesh, Mundra in Gujarat and Krishnapatnam in Andhra Pradesh.

The development of projects at Tadri in Karnataka, Akaltara in Chhattisgarh and Girye in Maharashtra, is contingent upon the availability of requisite clearances and confirmation with regard to availability of land for the project by the State authorities.

Supply of free power to farmers

**488. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:**

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has compiled data of 6 SEBs which are offering free or subsidized power to consumers in agricultural sector;

(b) if so, whether they are losing around Rs. 4,014 crore annually due to under-cost power supply scheme;

(c) if so, whether the Centre has reiterated need for States to disconnect their free power policy and PM has said that free power concept was a big hurdle in efforts to improve the country's power supply;

(d) if so, the steps his Ministry is considering to take in this regard; and

(e) how many States have so far stopped this practice?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE): (a) At present four States viz., Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab and Tamil Nadu are giving free supply of power to various categories of agriculture consumers.

(b) Section 65 of the Electricity Act provides that if the State Government requires the grant of any subsidy to any consumer or class of consumers in the tariff determined by the State Commissions, the State Government shall pay to the concerned utility/licensee the full amount required to compensate the grant of subsidy. The estimated annual expenditure of these States on subsidy is as under: